

**APPENDIX 3**  
**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

**From:** [Mark Pedulla](#)  
**To:** [Autler, Gerald;](#)  
**CC:**  
**Subject:** Comments on Northeastern University  
**Date:** Friday, July 21, 2006 10:55:08 AM  
**Attachments:**

---

Gerald,

I am writing to oppose amending Northeastern's Master Plan to include St. Ann's. While I support Northeastern building more dorms on their core campus, I am opposed to the University placing additional properties into their Master Plan without having discussed those properties during the public process.

I live at 16 Symphony Rd., where the decisions of institutions in the area have a major affect on the life of the neighborhood and the community. I feel strongly that it is the role of municipal government and the BRA to act in ways that protect communities against the impacts of private institutional forces such as Northeastern.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,  
Mark Pedulla  
16 Symphony Rd. #2  
Boston, MA 02115

Dear Neighbors,

# Please join us to tell Northeastern: **No more expansion without public process!**

NU is trying to add 4 properties, including **St. Ann's Church and 109 Hemenway Street**, to their Institutional Master Plan as they seek approval for their new dorms.

There has been no public process to discuss the future uses of these properties!

**Once these properties are added to the NU Master Plan they are not subject to local zoning and the university can do what they want with them.**

**Fenway CDC says:**

**YES to the 2 new dorms, but  
NO to adding property to the  
Master Plan without a public process**

PTO →

What you can do:

**1) Attend the BRA public meeting** about this proposal on **Tuesday, July 25** at 6:00 at 450 Dodge Hall (off the main NU quad on Huntington Avenue.)

**2) Submit your written comments.** Tell the city you support the location of the two new dorms, the result of a long process with the Community Task Force and a community process led by the Coalition to Limit University Expansion (CLUE), but oppose the addition of other properties in the Master Plan.

Send comments by August 10<sup>th</sup> to:

Gerald Autler, Boston Redevelopment Authority, One City Hall Plaza, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Boston, MA 02201

Phone: 617-918-4438 Fax: 617-367-5916 Email: [Gerald.autler.bra@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Gerald.autler.bra@cityofboston.gov)

The project details can be viewed on the BRA website: [www.cityofboston.gov/bra/Planning](http://www.cityofboston.gov/bra/Planning)

**3) Call your elected officials** and ask for their support. Remind them:

**These are important neighborhood properties and  
the community should have a say in their future!**

Questions? Contact Jaime Smith at Fenway CDC  
617.267.4637 x19 • [jsmith@fenwaycdc.org](mailto:jsmith@fenwaycdc.org)





I'm a long-term resident of the Fenway  
and have watched with great distress  
the cavalier attitude of Northeastern University -  
encroaching on public property. The uncontrolled  
behavior of the students is an additional  
irritant. If they were housed and supervised  
by the school authorities, life would be more  
complete for the average resident.

I whole heartedly subscribe to the statements  
of the Fenway ADC on the front of this sheet.

Mrs. Sydney E. Leonard

7/24/06

L

Sydney E. Leonard  
1179 Boylston St Apt 21  
Boston, MA 02215

102 Gainsborough Street, #203E  
Boston, MA 02115

July 25, 2006

Mr. Gerald Autler  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
One City Hall Plaza  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02201

Re: *St. Ann's Church, Fenway*

Dear Mr. Autler:

I am a 9-year property owner of a condominium on Gainsborough Street and, with the exception of the encroachment of Northeastern students, have been a happy resident.

Life on Gainsborough Street, particularly at night, can be loud with students leaving Our House East—the bar establishment on Gainsborough Street—particularly at 2:30 a.m. Often in the morning the street, when I walk to work, is littered with beer cans and bottles and more, even puddles of vomit from over-liquored students of the night before. This is not uncommon. When I walk home from the Orange Line Massachusetts Avenue stop along Gainsborough Street, past the coffee shop, bar and cigarette shop, St. Ann's Church heralds a peacefulness to the street, particularly after a hectic day at a demanding job at a downtown investment firm. I cannot express with words how much this oasis of quiet with its patch of lawn and hydrangeas is welcome.

While I applaud the location of the two new Northeastern dorms (even though I will be passing one every day to and from work), I am strongly, strongly opposed to the inclusion of St. Ann's Church into Northeastern's Institutional Master Plan, and not only for the personal reasons of loving the quiet and stillness and sanity which the church property instills.

As you know, the middle class, of which I am a part, is being forced out of the Fenway due to a lack of rental housing and high rents of those properties that remain. There are few community gathering places in the Fenway. St. Ann's Church should remain in its current structural incarnation as a gathering place for the community or as housing for the community—the community that as taxpayers such as myself—puts up with so much from the mammoth institution of Northeastern and its students.

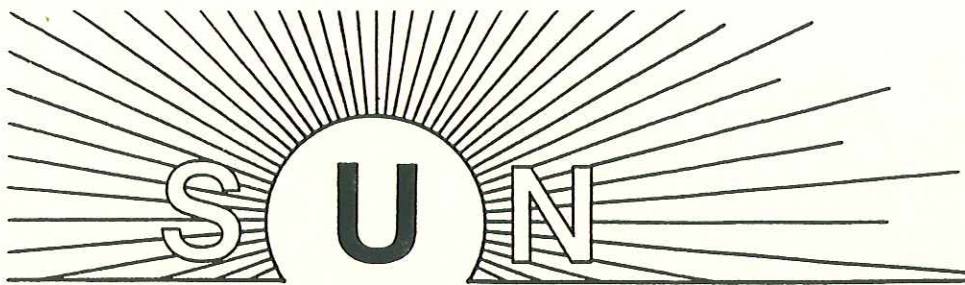
Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this matter.

Very truly yours,



Susan Bullock





## **SYMPHONY UNITED NEIGHBORS**

P.O. Box 230134

Boston, MA 02123-0134

August 7, 2006

**To: Gerald Autler, Senior Project Manager  
Boston Redevelopment Authority**

### **Comments from Symphony United Neighbors (SUN) on Northeastern University IMPNF/Third Amendment to Master Plan**

#### **General comments:**

Symphony United Neighbors agreed with the original Task Force "scenarios" for dormitory sites as well as the conditions they included regarding other properties (page 1-8). However, since Northeastern cannot realistically include the YMCA in its plans at this time, we understand why it presented a somewhat different plan.

From SUN's point of view, increasing the number of beds planned for Parcel 18 West is desirable, as it speeds up reaching the goals for on-campus housing. The new building model presented at the Task Force meeting (in place of the original two high-rise towers) seemed original and acceptable. The neighborhood representatives and abutters for Parcel 18, however, have a far greater stake than SUN in that part of the project and in the promised economic development.

We also have no objections to the proposed future uses listed in the PNF for Cullinane Hall and the five other sites (Gainsborough Garage, Gainsborough Parking, North Lot, Camden Lot, Ryder Lot). However, SUN asks that certain conditions be added to the plans for North Lot (see below).

As was mentioned at the Task Force meeting (July 26), many people in the neighborhood are uneasy about the addition of recently acquired sites to the Institutional Master Plan at what seems like the last minute. Like several Task Force members, SUN wishes this had come up earlier in the process and been discussed by the Task Force. Our concern is that, once a site is in the Master Plan, it becomes less subject to neighborhood input and zoning constraints. We would like to be reassured that all these "new" sites, particularly St. Ann's Church, will go through a thorough neighborhood review and have certain use limits placed on them.

A final concern is the tax status of these properties, especially those recently acquired. As institutions acquire more and more property in a neighborhood, homeowners' property taxes continue to rise.

#### **The Symphony Neighborhood**

While Northeastern's overall plans for expansion and student housing are important to the Symphony-Gainsborough-St. Stephen neighborhood, our principal concerns have been and continue to be the future uses of North Lot, St. Ann's Church and its site, and (to a lesser extent) 109 Hemenway.



The development of North Lot and the St. Ann's site will have far-reaching impacts on the future of the Symphony neighborhood. What happens there will affect our quality of life, neighborhood stability, property values, and, in fact, the survival of the neighborhood's basic identity as a desirable place to live.

North Lot (PNF page 1-16)

The neighborhood was relieved when North Lot was ruled out as a possible dormitory site. In general, the list of uses suggested for this space looks acceptable: But Northeastern needs to spell out more specifics, recognizing that anything built on North Lot is in very close proximity to one side of the residential Gainsborough Street condominiums. A future agreement should include these stipulations:

- (a) There will never be residential uses of this space.
- (b) Planned uses for the space, including food service and recreation, should end their activities not later than 9:00–10:00 pm
- (c) Any buildings on this site must be in scale with the surrounding neighborhood in terms of height and mass and, one hopes, architectural style.
- (d) Laboratory and research facilities will not include dangerous uses such as biohazards, toxic chemicals, or radioactive material.

St. Ann's Church

Overall, SUN welcomes the proposal to keep St. Ann's Church as a non-residential space that will be home to religious services, cultural performances, school and neighborhood meetings, and similar uses. These are events for which the neighborhood does not presently have many good spaces available. *BUT* we want to be sure that those uses will continue well past the current vision of using the building that way for 3–5 years. Those conditions must be imbedded in the zoning language, the Master Plan, or *somewhere*.

The church's corner location, history, and architectural style make it a natural focal point—the place where neighborhood and university meet. It is important to preserve that role, no matter what structure stands on the site. These issues need to be addressed:

- (a) The St. Ann's site must continue to serve the nonresidential uses mentioned above and in the PNF document.
- (b) All future uses must consider the site's location at the end of a homogeneous residential street—the Gainsborough neighborhood. Additionally, its signage should avoid being too obviously institutional or commercial-looking.
- (c) The present St. Ann's building has structural problems. If and when it has to be replaced, any new building should strive to echo the present building in mass, height, scale, and uses. It must remain in harmony with the neighborhood.
- (d) As with North Lot, the scale and character of the surrounding buildings must be respected in any rebuilding or replacement of St. Ann's. Although the Symphony neighborhood is not a recognized Historical District, it is still an important example of Boston's traditional brick townhouse style. Any new structure should try to preserve that ambience.

We appreciate the chance to give our input. Thank you.

The Board of Symphony United Neighbors

Ed Burke

Jane Hartmann

Barbara Forster

Barbara Simons, President

Andrew Friedland



81 Lawn Street  
Roxbury, Ma. 02120  
August 9, 2006

Gerald Autler, Senior Project Manager/Planner  
BRA  
Boston City Hall 02201

Re: NU IMP Amendment and Residence Halls

Dear Mr. Autler,

P18-

What is good for the city and what is good for the institution?

What are the revitalization strategies that residents support? What is the context of the site?

What were the original intentions of the plans for P18? Long ago goals for "wealth creation" in the community sound familiar, well paying jobs with career ladders and "investment opportunities". However government (the RMV and Police HQ) replaced the private capital dream and now its come to this – dormitories for Northeastern University. Expanding institutions dominate our economy; there is no else apparently to depend on for community "benefits". Even the churches are moving on.

The Campus High Urban Renewal plan was a failure; the Madison Park cement fortress was supposed to replace all those "obsolete" social service and municipal facilities. Now, the large high schools are getting subdivided into smaller "academies"; similarly, big box stores are also out of favor in the urban environment. Boston's high rent shopping districts are filled with small businesses. There is turn over but one failure doesn't doom the entire block. There are lots of storefront vacancies on Tremont Street between St. Cyprian's and Douglas Park. Shouldn't the priority be supporting retail businesses there – rather than adding more chain stores and franchises on property owned by tax exempt institutions?

What is the common ground between the campus and the adjacent housing developments? As the university expands to Lower Roxbury, the priority must be creating transition zones so that the neighborhood survives (and thrives). Transitional zones are porous areas where the public and the institutionally affiliated freely cross paths, for example, business districts and public facilities used by everyone. By their nature, dorms are not a transitional use., ideally, mixed uses..., cultural facilities, transit oriented development, active retail that doesn't compete with the existing stores, farmers markets, places for children to be safe. Fast food and expensive convenience stores are not the answer and neither is the predominant use described for Buildings I and J, primarily student bedrooms.

Daycare facilities were always part of the original P18 plans; going further back, the Urban Renewal plans from the 1960s promised a new elementary school. My suggestion - use the model of Columbia's Bank Street School or the Univ. of Chicago Lab's Schools. The NU School of Education should take a leadership role and develop a high quality early education program PLUS a demonstration school. Bank Street is ages 3-13, the Lab Schools are K- 12; successful, high in demand and serving diverse students - children of faculty, staff and the neighborhood TOGETHER. They are private schools with financial aid for those who qualify. The Center for Collaborative Education based at 1135 Tremont is also well situated to partner with the university. The Bank Street School occupies a 10 story building on Columbia's campus. P18 is ideally sited for a similar project.

The benefit of additional on campus housing is a double-edged sword for the immediate community. The impacts of so many additional undergraduates living in close proximity to their peers in private housing



are unfortunately negative. Activities not tolerated on campus spill over because the dorms are so close to the off campus residences. "Party central" on Mission Hill will inevitably expand to Lower Roxbury. Will the Madison Park soccer and football field be the next university acquisition?

Can a car-dominated strip be transformed into something else, narrowing the roadways by allowing on street parking and neckdowns for pedestrians as the 1996 Lower Roxbury Transportation Study suggested? Remember the "Downscaling Tremont Street" objective mentioned in the 2004 Roxbury Strategic Master Plan? Redesigning the crosswalks at Ruggles and Tremont was a concept endorsed from the city and residents when widening Ruggles Street was last proposed. How will the students walk to class and the library; over the guarded overpasses or up and down through the station, along the trafficked roadway? Widened roadways were not supported by the neighbors for very good reasons; however improved access to the T station and more pleasant walking conditions along Ruggles and Tremont Streets shouldn't be postponed any longer. The existing pedestrian network and connections to all the adjacent public streets need improvement. The long closed off egress from the train platform directly to Ruggles Street should be reopened as part of any P18 West development plan. The original design for "kiss and ride" drop off access to the Orange line station was adjacent to 1135 Tremont. The underutilized circular driveway at Ruggles should be revamped also for drop off/pick up.

Only the retail will have entries facing the public streets- the office and dormitory entrances are elsewhere. A secured campus obviously is the goal but is this the best design for everyone else? The Roxbury Master Plan asked for ground floor visual transparency and frequent street level public entrances for P3 across the street. Will the full service dining facility be open to the public?

The Existing Conditions Plan for the proposed P18 dorms unfortunately leave off immediate Lower Roxbury neighbors; Saint Katharine Drexel Parish (the c.1935 historic former Ruggles Street Baptist Church), most of Whittier Street Housing and the small streets, Warwick, Sussex, etc. These are all significant community defining "places" that will be impacted by the expansion of the school southward. I have enclosed a copy of another P18 graphic that better shows the actual non-campus neighbors, - the 1989 map done for the Roxbury Neighborhood Council by Boston Urban Gardeners. Hopefully subsequent filings will be more inclusive.

Who are the "abutters" that have been selected to privately review the project? What is the accountability and how can the city safeguard the interests of the local residents if the process is not transparent and inclusive? Who represents whom? How can tenants, church members AND home and small business owners be heard? Presenting the P18 project to the Lower Roxbury Coalition based out of Whittier Street Health Center and meeting regularly at St. Katharine Drexel, with more than 25 community based organizations participating, would offer more opportunity for shared dialogue. The NU Community Task Force supported these plans but with the proviso that abutters should have input. However the community can be easily dismissed if they are separate voices and not in the room together.

A question for the university concerning the 2003 DEP issued 48 page Activity and Use Limitation for P18 included with the 1135 Tremont deed (map attached). The restrictions need to be explained and the remediation detailed. If multi-family development is disallowed then the current proposal needs to clear some serious environmental hurdles.

## Rezoning recent acquisitions-

Institutional Master Plans constitute zoning regulations for the included property – the IMP provisions supersede any other underlying code. Therefore- it is inappropriate for the city and the neighborhoods to agree to rezone parcels that are landbanked with no immediate development plans filed. Major

development opportunities are underway in Roxbury Crossing (P25), P3 between the Reggie Lewis Track Center and Whittier Street as well as P18. There are changes expected in nearly every nearby block. Promised community benefits with the original agreements for Parcel 18 included the development of affordable housing. Vacant land in Lower Roxbury should not be zoned institutional. As with Davenport Commons, the school can build housing in partnership with the city, these lots deserve careful consideration and public review in the next Master Plan. St. Ann's Church also does not warrant institutional zoning, the immediate neighbors have not agreed on the future of this site. The 2005 deed specified that NU would provide alternative spaces on campus for Catholic masses if the church was redeveloped, however the PNF does not mention the agreement or describe the substitute space.

The size and height of the proposed project on P18 will be controversial; the number of student beds even more so. The public review process should not be fast-forwarded. The Community Task Force should not be dismissed but be utilized to review all mitigations and benefit agreements.

Sincerely,

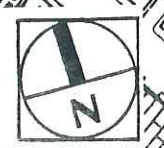
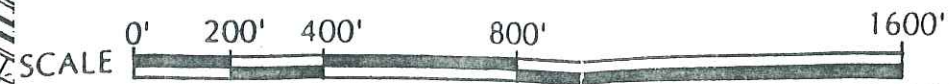
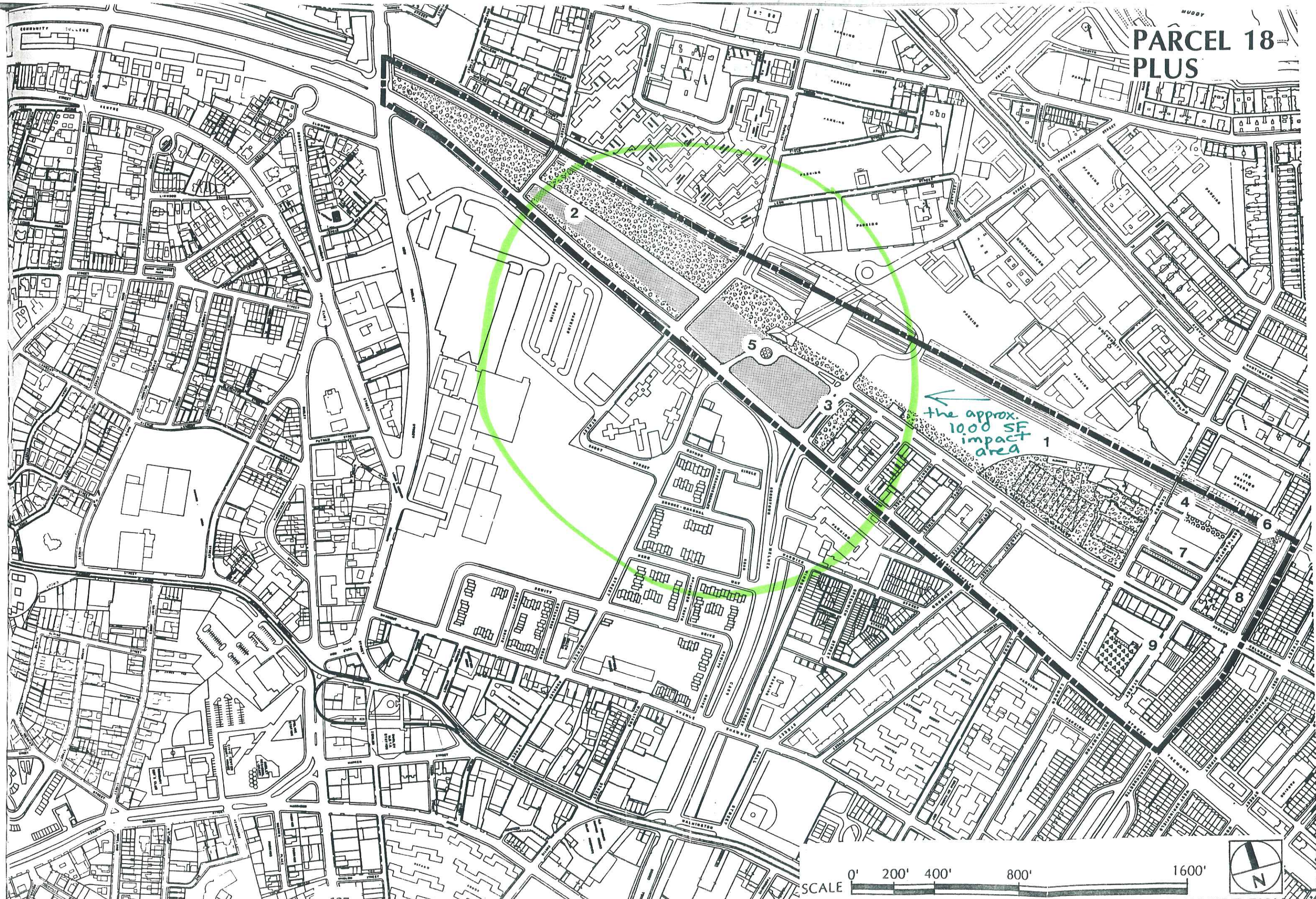


Alison Pultinas

Cc: CC Michael Ross, CC Chuck Turner,  
State Rep. Jeffrey Sanchez, State Rep. Gloria Fox, State Rep. Byron Rushing,  
State Senator Dianne Wilkerson



PARCEL 18  
PLUS







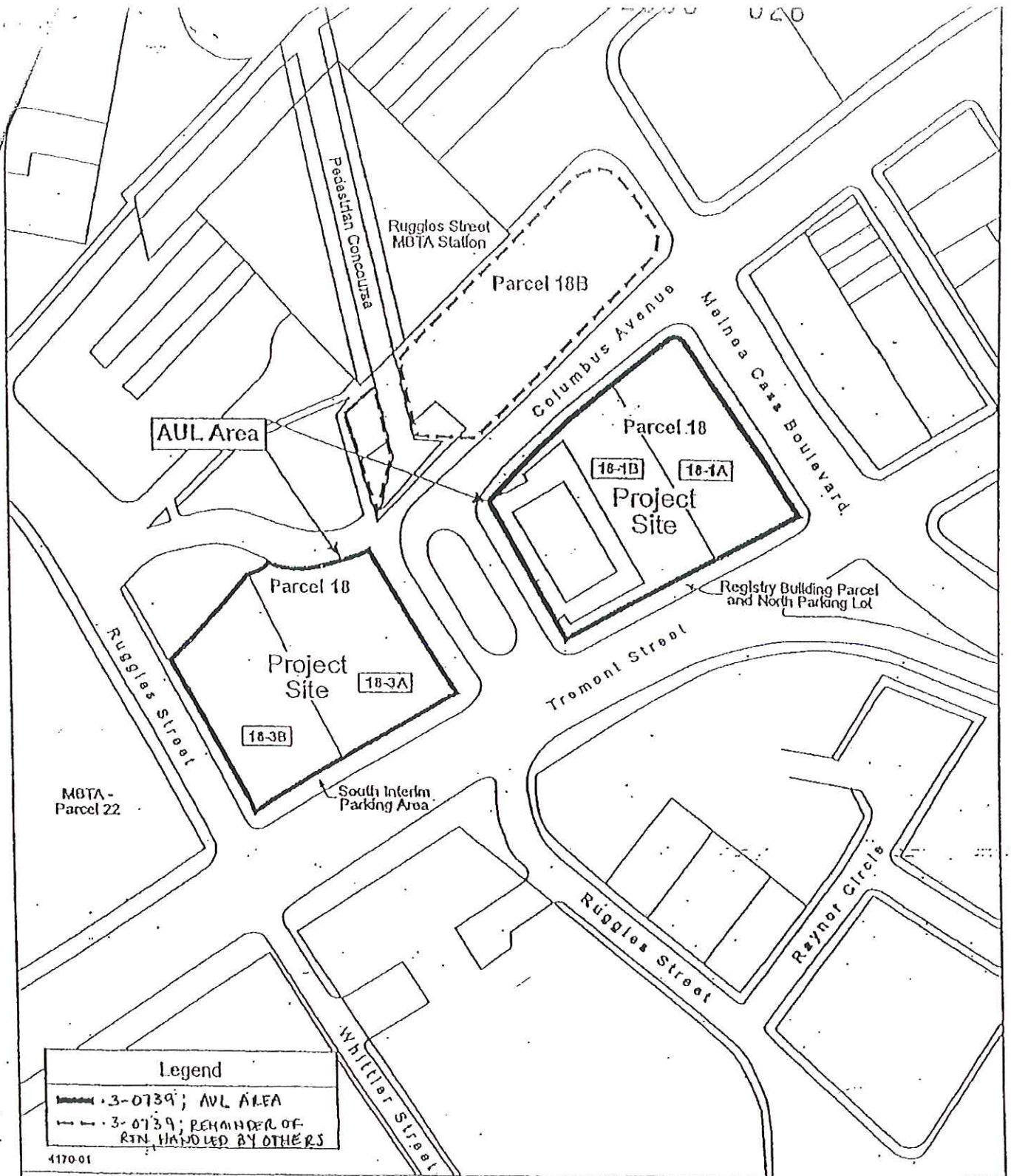
NOTES

DOCUMENTS SHOW  
THE DATE THAT THIS PLAN IS BLACKED UPON MAY 1944  
COULD BE FORMED BY NEW HAVEN  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH  
AND RESEARCH AND RESEARCH  
SOME MAY BE RESEARCH AND RESEARCH  
PLANNED CONDUCTED IN RESEARCH PLACE  
AND RESEARCH RESEARCH AND RESEARCH

	19-20 = 19-24	10-12 = 10-14
PARCEL		
BUILDING AREA	47,880 sq. ft.	19,254 sq. ft.
PAV. DRIVE	27,034 sq. ft.	
PAV. DRIVE	9,242 sq. ft.	8,250 sq. ft.
GRASSY AREA		3,447 sq. ft.
TOTAL PARCEL AREA	57,222 sq. ft.	55,407 sq. ft.

[illegible]





1135 Tremont Street  
Boston, Massachusetts

**Legend**  
 3-0739; AVL AREA  
 3-0739; REMAINDER OF  
 RIN HANDLED BY OTHERS  
 4170-01



0 150 Feet

RIZZO ASSOCIATES, INC.

Source: City of Boston, MA  
 Assessor's Map; Sheet 21H-10E  
 Map Dated, 1962; Map Revised, 1989

AUL Area

Kathleen A. Devine  
49 Symphony Road #33  
Boston, MA 02115  
(617) 536-5186  
FAX: (617) 249-0271  
[Kathleen.devine@verizon.net](mailto:Kathleen.devine@verizon.net)

August 9, 2006

Gerald Autler  
Senior Project Manager and Planner  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
City Hall Plaza – 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02201

RE: Northeastern University Proposed Institutional Master Plan Amendment and New Dormitories

Dear Mr. Autler:

Following are my comments and suggestions relative to the PNF and 3<sup>rd</sup> IMP Amendment filed by Northeastern University, which I propose for inclusion in your scoping determination.

1. Community Benefits Agreement – At the Article 80 Public Hearing, I distributed a limited number of copies of a publication entitled: “Community Benefits Agreements – Making Development Projects Accountable,” by Julian Gross, Legal Director of the California Partnership for Working Families. You took one of the copies to read, and I hope you have had the opportunity to do so.

The experience of the neighborhoods with “community benefits” has been one of seeing taxpayer subsidized institutions reaping huge economic benefits, with little or no guarantee that the ripple effects of such subsidized development actually benefit the community in which the development is located. Witness the parsing of the term “community benefit” relative to the Whittier Street Health Center, in the former DMV building in Roxbury, now owned by Northeastern. There, Northeastern promised “free rent” to Whittier, provided Whittier pay 21.65% of the buildings operating costs. What is rent besides a payment towards the operating costs (and return on investment) of the building owner? This word-play has resulted in Whittier being forced to pay an effective rent much higher than it would have had Northeastern maintained the spirit of the agreement, and has resulted in a community burden, not a community benefit.

What the community (and all Boston neighborhoods) needs is a Development/Benefits Agreement that is an enforceable, legal document, negotiated with community input, providing measurable benefits which can be monitored. As outlined in the CBA publication, the agreement should include items of direct community benefit such as first-source hiring programs; living wage agreements for both construction and permanent hires; environmental and gentrification amelioration; housing and facilities for community services and an appropriate mix of retail, office and other commercial ventures suitable for the neighborhood. **Scoping determination request: That NU and the BRA convene a working session of the NU Community Task Force to create a Community Development/Benefits Agreement modeled on the CBA publication.**



Gerald Autler  
Senior Project Manager and Planner  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
August 9, 2006  
Page Two

2. Third IMP Amendment – At the BRA Board meeting where the Second IMP Amendment was approved for NU, the BRA Board was quite clear that the Second Amendment was to be the last one prior to a new IMP. While the communities adjacent to NU are anxious to have additional core-campus dormitories built expeditiously, there is no reason to include other properties, particularly St. Ann's Church, 15 Coventry Street and 109 Hemenway at this time. The fate of St. Ann's requires a thorough, formal community process, not an adjunct determination along with the approval of dormitory sites. *Scoping Determination request:* **That St. Ann's; 15 Coventry Street and 109 Hemenway Street be removed from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Amendment to the IMP to be included in the next full IMP.**
3. Parcel 18 and Parcel 3 - The Roxbury community is on the verge of major impacts from both the Parcel 3 and Parcel 18 development proposals. Inasmuch as one of the Parcel 3 proponents has presented a plan which includes housing for 1400 students, it is conceivable that there could be 2600 students living on these two parcels. That is an enormous figure to ask that any community absorb. It is especially onerous when viewed relative to Northeastern's intransigence on the issue of capping enrollment. *Scoping Determination request:* **That any dormitory development by Northeastern be tied to a 20 year cap on total enrollment, not to exceed 15,000 students.**
4. Economic Development and Wealth Creation – Some undetermined amount and type of retail development is proposed for the street level of the dormitories to be developed on Parcel 18. At the public hearing, Northeastern stated that it had not yet commissioned a market or feasibility study to determine what types of retail would be successful in this location. The residents of Whittier Street Housing have, at many public meetings, voiced their request for a grocery store on one of these parcels. I have attached to this letter a publication entitled, "Food, Markets and Healthy Communities," which shows how the food store which the residents want can be a catalyst for further development and improve the quality of their lives.



Gerald Autler  
Senior Project Manager and Planner  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
August 9, 2006  
Page Three

There is also no updated plan for the commercial development of the balance of Parcel 18. A hotel development, originally envisioned for that site, may no longer be a viable choice. Further, no mechanisms have been put in place to ensure that Parcel 18 (east and west) becomes a vehicle for wealth creation for the Roxbury community. *Scoping determination request: That Northeastern be directed to commission a market and feasibility study for the proposed retail space, with particular emphasis on food or grocery stores; that Northeastern commission a planning and market study to determine the optimum commercial development for the balance of Parcel 18, with attention paid to the proposed development of Parcel 3; and that, in addition to first source hiring, a mechanism be created for community wealth generation resulting from the development of Parcel 18, such as a land lease of Parcel 18 where the lease payments are used in their entirety to benefit Roxbury residents.*

Thank you for your consideration of these matters in writing the scoping determination.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Devine  
Attachments: (2)

Cc: Councilors Turner and Ross





Tel 617-566-6565  
Fax 617-566-1440

August 9, 2006

Gerald Autler  
Senior Project Manager/Planner  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Boston City Hall, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02201

RE: IMPNF – Third Amendment to the Institutional Master Plan  
PNF – Resident Hall I and Building J  
PNF – Resident Hall K

Dear Mr. Autler:

Mission Hill Neighborhood Housing Services has reviewed and discussed the IMPNF/PNF submitted by Northeastern University. Following the presentation by the University at its August Board Meeting, Mission Hill NHS would like to go on record in support of the IMPNF and PNF submitted by Northeastern University and offers the following comments and conditions:

- MH NHS supports the construction of the 600-bed on-campus dormitory where Cullinane Hall is presently located.
- MH NHS supports the construction of new resident halls totaling approximately 1,200 beds on Parcel 18 West with retail and non-residential space primarily for the relocation of the Cullinane Hall uses provided that Northeastern University works with the abutters to the Parcel 18 -- including the residents at Alice Taylor Development -- to work out actual bed count, massing, and benefits. The University has agreed to fulfill its commitment to an economic development project on the other part of Parcel 18.
- MHNHS support is also contingent upon specific changes to Northeastern University's practices and policies in order to alleviate the negative impact of Northeastern students living in residential housing in the abutting neighborhoods, including Mission Hill: (a) The University must *require* freshmen and sophomores to live in supervised housing on campus; (b) The University must provide economic support to make dorms as affordable to students as living in our family housing stock; (c) No dorms beds should be

rented to other institutions; (d) Supervision, accountability, and consequences for students living on and off campus must be equal.

- Northeastern University currently houses about 50% of its students on campus. This is not acceptable. Mission Hill has paid a huge cost resulting from the lack of on campus beds. The quality of life in our neighborhood has declined as 1000s of students have taken over the front of the Hill, but even more damaging to the survival of this residential neighborhood has been the loss of hundreds of families forced out as housing prices and monthly rents skyrocket out of reach of most working families who are replaced with 6 or 7 students illegally occupying a triple decker flat. The construction of dorms at P18 and Cullinane are the short-term “solutions”. Mission Hill would like to survive to see Northeastern reach 75% on campus housing. Toward that end, our support for the IMPNF and PNF proposed requires the prioritizing of the development of dorms at the Gainsborough Street Garage site as the next project after P18 and Cullinane. Further, the potential positive impact of the construction of new dormitories will be lost if Northeastern University abandons its publicly stated goal of maintaining its student body at 15,000 students or less.
- Additionally, Northeastern University must make a commitment to Mission Hill NHS and the Mission Hill community to continue to work with us to resolve the student behavior issues on the Hill, to collaborate with Mission Hill NHS in our efforts to return Mission Hill housing now occupied by students to housing affordable to working families, and to ensure positive economic impacts on Mission Hill residents as abutters to the University including improved access for jobs, internships and educational opportunities at the Northeastern.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. Should you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Maryanne O’Keefe  
MH NHS President  
NU Community Task Force

Patricia Flaherty  
MH NHS Senior Project Manager  
NU Community Task Force

Cc: Mayor Thomas Menino  
Senator Dianne Wilkerson  
State Representative Jeffrey Sanchez  
City Councilor Michael Ross  
Nikko Mendoza, Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Services





August 10, 2006

Gerald Autler, Senior Project Manager/Planner  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
One City Hall Square, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02201

**RE: Northeastern University's Project Notification Forms**

Dear Gerald:

Fenway CDC is a neighborhood-based membership organization devoted to enhancing the stability, sustainability and diversity of the Fenway neighborhood of Boston by providing opportunities for all Fenway residents, particularly those of limited means, to thrive in the community. In this regard, our principal interest in Northeastern's proposed PNF's is in assuring that the stability, diversity and residential quality of the Fenway and other surrounding neighborhoods are supported by the university's plans. Specifically, we are concerned about the exodus of long term residents, including families with children, from the East Fens in recent years as the number of students and institutional uses in the neighborhood have grown. We believe the university's plans should not and need not come at the expense of residents' vision for the community. The comments contained in this letter regarding Northeastern's PNFs come from this perspective.

We appreciate your consideration of our comments in response to Northeastern University's recently submitted Project Notification Forms (PNFs). Although the university has discussed all three as a unified submittal, we respond to them individually here and believe that considering them as individual submissions would benefit both the university and the surrounding communities. In these submittals, the university has proposed two new dormitory sites and an amendment to its soon-to-expire institutional master plan (IMP) that would bring five neighborhood properties within the IMP.

The dorm site proposals represent the university's effort to house a larger proportion of its student body on campus. We applaud this serious response to the mayor's admirable 2004 initiative to relieve pressure on the tight housing market by increasing on-campus housing at Northeastern. We are especially pleased by the open process through which the two Northeastern sites were chosen. The efforts of abutting communities--the South End, Roxbury, Mission Hill, and the Fenway--to work collaboratively to identify community-friendly sites that would support the university's needs has produced a positive outcome for all parties. The Coalition to

**FENWAY  
COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT  
CORPORATION**

**73 Hemenway Street  
Boston, Massachusetts  
02115**

**Telephone  
617 267-4637  
Facsimile  
617 267-8591**

**BUILDING  
A BETTER FENWAY  
SINCE 1973**

Limit University Expansion (CLUE) recommendations in a presentation and discussion at the Northeastern University Community Task Force (NUCTF) identified sites that will help delineate Northeastern's campus and, more significantly, support development of substantial net new on-campus beds. We commend the university and the city for supporting this path-breaking process and hope that it will establish the new standard for community involvement of institutional master plans.

### **DORM-SITING PROPOSALS**

We strongly endorse the proposed Parcel 18 site, with the proviso (already agreed to by Northeastern) that the university continues its efforts to advance an economic-development project on the eastern end of the parcel. We also strongly endorse the proposed reuse of the Cullinane site as a dorm site and the ultimate addition of 10 Gainsborough Street, which taken together would form the nucleus of an "East Village" cluster of dorms, as envisioned in the CLUE presentation and recommendations. We support the change of use requests for parcels already owned by the university (North Lot, Camden Lot and Ryder lot.)

### **AMENDMENT FOR NEWLY ACQUIRED PROPERTIES**

Northeastern proposes including in its IMP five properties acquired since 2000. We do not support the inclusion of 4 of the 5 properties. The exception is 10 Gainsborough Street, which the Task Force discussed at some length and supported as a dorm site for future use.

Our major concern is the inclusion of the St. Ann's site, which has been the focus of substantial community interest and concern since the Archdiocese closed the church and placed it on the market. We consider St. Ann's to be a gateway to the East Fens community, and assuring that its use does not erode the residential character of the area is of paramount concern to us. We believe the properties on this list (with the exception of 10 Gainsborough Street) should be decoupled from the dorm PNFs. The university has made a convincing argument for moving the two dorm sites along quickly. However, the inclusion of the additional parcels, specifically St Ann's, raises issues that require more deliberation than the university's time frame would allow.

Beyond our concern about the substantive planning issues presented, the proposed amendment to the IMP short-circuits the city's own process for considering changes on and around the Northeastern campus. Although the university has expressed willingness to "engage in conversations" with community residents and organizations, such an offer is no substitute for a formal process like the one that initially brought the NUCTF into existence, a process in which the city plays an



important mediating role. The sudden appearance of St. Ann's in this PNF, coupled with the short time frame allowed for comments, makes substantial community-wide dialogue impossible. The proper--and mandated--venue for these discussions is the NUCTF.

The Fenway CDC strongly urges the BRA to direct the university to return this discussion to the task force. St. Ann's has never been raised as an issue at task force meetings because residents, community organizations, and their representatives on the task force have always assumed that its future would be discussed in full once the process for preparing the new IMP was under way. Northeastern now proposes to delay that process for two years while its new president familiarizes himself with the school and a re-accreditation process takes place.

At the same time that the university seeks to slow down that timetable, however, it seeks to speed it up (or circumvent it entirely) regarding the parcels it wishes to add to its existing IMP. The university has argued unconvincingly that it cannot put St. Ann's to use under existing zoning for the site, so it must add the church to the IMP. (Presumably for functional "neatness" and not actual necessity, the four other parcels come along for the ride.) Including St. Ann's and the other parcels in the IMP will circumvent meaningful planning for detailed uses for the site. We strongly prefer to see the university seek a zoning variance--if, in fact, existing zoning does present an obstacle--rather than to leapfrog these parcels ahead of the rest of the IMP amendment without proper discussion.

### **SUGGESTED SCOPING DETERMINATION ACTIONS**

We ask the BRA, as part of its scoping determination, to:

1. Direct Northeastern to restart the IMP process by September, 2006.
2. Decouple the inclusion of four of the five new parcels from the dorm siting PNFs so that the university can vet the issue fully with the community before the NUCTF.
3. If, in the meantime, the university requires legal permission to change uses on any the four parcels, the BRA should further direct Northeastern to pursue a zoning variance for the parcels where this may be necessary. Any variance requests should include sunset clauses so that variances end once the new IMP takes effect.

### **CONCLUSION**

As a community, we seek a more productive relationship with Northeastern, whose academic and planning resources have long held great potential for neighboring communities—a promise that has yet to be fulfilled. We feel strongly that the process for developing the new IMP should focus on programs and services that

could improve quality of life for the university's neighbors. This will not only help offset the detrimental impacts our communities have long endured as hosts to satellite facilities of the university, it will also benefit the university itself by improving the neighborhoods within which it sits.

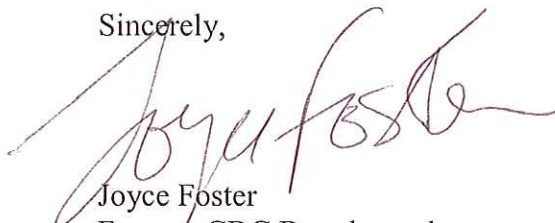
Examples of programs and services that could benefit Northeastern's neighborhoods include:

- Development of a formalized method for consulting with appropriate faculty members and programs for advice on and assistance with economic-development projects, with particular emphasis on workforce development.
- Cooperation on housing projects, including mixed-income and affordable housing designed to draw families displaced by student renters back to the neighborhoods around the university. The Davenport Commons project in Lower Roxbury represents a model of this kind of development.
- Collaboration on programs and services for young residents in the Fenway neighborhood.
- Initiatives that benefit the large population of elders in the Fenway community, including life-long learning programs and access to university courses and resources.
- A formal collaboration among community leaders, university officials, elected officials, and property owners and agents to develop programs designed to curb the destructive behavior of a small, but very disruptive proportion of student tenants.

The 30-day comment period for the PNFs—and the fact that this period fell during the height of the summer vacation season—has not provided sufficient time to poll a wider sampling of residents to develop a more thorough list. This again points to the need for these issues to be discussed in a public forum like the NUCTF.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments and for the BRA's efforts to address the needs of both Northeastern and the surrounding communities through this planning process.

Sincerely,



Joyce Foster  
Fenway CDC Board member  
and representative to the NUCTF



Carl Nagy-Koechlin  
Executive Director



**From:** [Todd Fielder](#)  
**To:** [Autler, Gerald;](#)  
**CC:**  
**Subject:** Northeastern IMP & PNF - Article 80 Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, August 10, 2006 7:42:48 PM  
**Attachments:**

---

I am a resident of the East Fenway and a neighbor of Northeastern University. I have reviewed their recent submittal of an Institution Master Plan (IMP) Amendment and Project Notification Form (PNF). I am in basic agreement with both proposals and think that they reflect vast improvements over previous proposals for new dormitory construction. These improvements were accomplished through 18 months of hard work on the part of the community, elected officials, Northeastern University, and the BRA. However, there are few areas of the proposal that require improvement or additional clarification.

**Parcel 18 West** – The proposed dormitory / mixed used project is good. The ground floor retail uses are a very important part of the project since it at the corner of Northeastern's campus and at a major intersection and transportation corridor for the city. The ground floor retail must be accessible and attractive for both Northeastern students and members of the community. Care must also be taken to provide a safe and attractive link from the building to the rest of Northeastern's campus. This is a difficult task due to the design and location of Ruggles station with separates the parcel from the rest of the campus.

**Residence Hall K** – The proposed project is good. This project and the future Gainsborough Garage Project need to keep St. Botolph St. and Gainsborough St. open as public streets for pedestrians, automobile traffic, and parking. These streets should not be closed as public streets and become part of Northeastern's campus as was done in the West Village. Groundwater level monitoring must occur as part of the construction project. Additional wells should be installed near any surrounding buildings that are on wood pilings. The Residence Hall K building design should not result in any permanent groundwater level reduction. If reduced ground water levels are noted during construction or if dewatering is required during construction, a recharge system needs to be used to protect neighboring building that are supported on wood pilings.

**North Lot** – Given the location of the this property and the fact it is surrounded by many non-university properties, some additional restrictions need to be placed on any future building projects on this site. These restrictions are required for the change of use to be acceptable. Any building project on this lot should not occupy more than 50% of the land area of the site. Any building project should not be taller the 44 feet (4 stories) to remain within the character of the residential neighborhood where North Lot is located. The design of any building needs to compliment the neighboring building architecturally (red and tan brick building form early 1900's). The current visual screen on the Gainsborough St side needs to be maintained (tree line between North Lot and Gainsborough St. parking lot). Plans must be developed so the cars that are currently park at this location do not start utilizing neighborhood streets instead (resident, 2 hour, meter, or unrestricted parking). Gainsborough Garage and North Lot should not be closed to parking at the same time as this would eliminate most parking of the east side of campus. New move-in plans need to be developed to deal with loss of North Lot as a staging and parking area. These new move-in plans should not further restrict the on-street parking on neighborhood streets or pedestrian access during move-in. The full Article 80 review process must be conducted on any specific project that is proposed.

**Camden Lot** – Any building project must provide an attractive background to the park that borders the site. Improvements to the footbridge over the MBTA tracks should be coordinated with the MBTA and undertaken in conjunction with this project and any Gainsborough Garage project. The MBTA exit to the footbridge should be changed to an entrance / exit as part of the footbridge improvements. This entrance can be unmanned using the new MBTA fare collection system. The full Article 80 review process must be conducted on any specific project that is proposed.

**Gainsborough Garage and Gainsborough Parking Lot** – The proposed additions to the IMP are acceptable. Maintaining a parking use on the first few levels of a new building is desirable and allows the dormitory portion of the project to start above the level of the MBTA tracks. Active ground floor uses should be considered at the corner of St. Botolph St. and Gainsborough St. Improvements to the footbridge over the MBTA tracks should be coordinated with the MBTA and undertaken in conjunction with this project and any Camden Lot project. The MBTA exit to the footbridge should be changed to an entrance / exit as part of the footbridge improvements. This entrance can be unmanned using the new MBTA fare collection system. St. Botolph St. and Gainsborough St. need to remain open as public streets for pedestrians, automobile traffic, and parking. These streets should not be closed as public streets and become part of



Northeastern's campus as was done in the West Village. Gainsborough Garage and North Lot should not be closed to parking at the same time as this would eliminate most parking of the east side of campus. The full Article 80 review process must be conducted on any specific building project that is proposed.

**St. Ann's Church** – Adding existing building and parking lot to the IMP is acceptable. Some clarification the uses is required. The primary uses should be meeting, religious, cultural and performance space. The parking, office, dining and library uses should be allowed as ancillary uses in support of the primary uses. Repairs and improvements to the existing building and parking lot should occur to allow these uses. No building demolition, new construction, or major changes to the exterior should occur without an Article 80 process. The building should remain available to the community for meetings for a minimum period of 20 years. A point of contact to arrange such community uses should be established in the Community and Government Relations office. This contact should be listed on the Northeastern website.

**109 Hemenway St., Billboard Lot, 15 Coventry St.** – Proposed additions to the IMP are acceptable. Any new construction must go through the Article 80 process. Repairs and maintenance of existing buildings that does not dramatically change the exterior is acceptable.

In addition to the comments on specific buildings and sites, a few general comments apply. A PILOT payment needs to be established for any buildings or sites that are removed from the tax rolls and changed to exempt as part of the IMP amendment. Care must be taken on the appearance and signage of all Northeastern building that are located within the East Fenway neighborhood. When an individual that is not familiar with the East Fenway walks down the street they should not get the feeling they are in the center of a college campus. They should leave with the feeling they are in a neighborhood and business district that has a college in it.

Todd Fielder  
84 Gainsborough St. #306  
Boston, MA 02115

**From:** [Jane Hartmann](#)  
**To:** [Autler, Gerald;](#)  
**CC:**  
**Subject:** NEU"s Master Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 16, 2006 6:07:46 PM  
**Attachments:**

---

Dear Mr. Autler,

My husband and I have faithfully attended BRA/NU/Task force meetings for the past several years as we believe strongly that NU needs to hear and consider neighborhood concerns before settling on proposed uses of acquired properties. There must always be a balancing of needs to insure that neighborhood/university relations are amicable. Active neighborhood participation in public meetings the past few years has clearly pushed NU into being a better neighbor. Neither the university nor the neighborhood wants a return to earlier days.

The coming meeting which focuses on the PNF regarding two new dorms has been well vetted by the community. We are , therefore, fully in support of the new dorms. However, we are NOT in favor of NU's adding four properties to their Master Plan without a public process to discuss possible future uses. This is particularly important as one of the properties is St. Ann's Church which is in the very center of the few residential streets of the East Fens. I believe that the Archdiocese specified acceptable uses which NU accepted by signing the purchase agreement. These and other issues relating to Fenway zoning laws and quality of life need to be discussed.

We are out of town next week, but we want to assure you that we fully support the PNF regarding new dorms since they are the result of collaboration. We request that you do NOT accept the addition of any properties to the NU Master Plan without scheduling a public process to discuss their future use.

Thank you in advance for your reply regarding these matters.

Sincerely,.

Jane and James Hartmann





August 21, 2006

Gerald Autler  
Project Manager, Northeastern University PNF  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Boston City Hall  
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Mr. Autler,

The Fenway Civic Association, the neighborhood's oldest and all-volunteer organization, supports the general terms of the recent filing by Northeastern University to expand its on-campus residential housing and specifically the University's goal of housing all freshman and sophomores.

The development of parcel 18 to include mixed office, housing and retail will be a great addition to the area south of Ruggles Station. Great care should be exhibited to allow the area to be safe and enjoyable for pedestrians and to encourage transit use at Ruggles and an active street life into the evening in that area. Unfortunately, the use of expanded roadways as cross-town connectors have made that a less than optimal urban environment, but this development could go a long way to changing it and helping further economic development and urban vitality along that corridor.

Our organization also supports the inclusion of properties recently acquired by Northeastern as these buildings are in need of repair and we understand the the Masterplanning process could take too long a time to allow NU to commit badly needed funds to maintain these buildings. Most notably, NU has committed to keeping the use of St. Ann's church in the heart of the East Fenway neighborhood as a place of worship and a cultural center and performance space, along with community accessibility.

We have found the process of a community based task-force and Northeastern's willingness to participate in this process a favorable way for the city to balance neighborhood needs with an institution's need to grow. We are also grateful for Jeff Dogget's leadership skills and clarity in communicating that has facilitated the sometimes difficult dialog between Northeastern University and the residential community.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Elizabeth Saunders". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Elizabeth Saunders  
Vice President  
For the Board of Fenway Civic Association

Gainsborough Neighborhood Association  
295 Huntington Ave. Suite 317  
Boston, MA 02115

August 22, 2006

Gerald Autler, Senior Project Manager/Planner,  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
One City Hall Square, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Mr. Autler,

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Gainsborough Neighborhood Association. The GNA is comprised of approximately three hundred and twenty-one condominium units in buildings 78-84, 90-96, 102-108, 79, 87, 95, 111 Gainsborough Street, and 128 Hemenway Street. The Board of Directors of the Gainsborough Neighborhood Association would like to express support for the Northeastern University proposals which have been presented by Jeff Doggett at a recent neighborhood meeting. These proposals, calling for the construction of dormitories and other facilities at Northeastern, expressly exclude the North Lot from consideration as a dormitory site. We support the use of the North Lot for other university buildings with parking and the recommendations regarding St. Ann's Church, which call for it to be kept in its present form, preferably in perpetuity.



Jeffrey Brody, President  
Gainsborough Neighborhood Association



23 August 2006

Mr. Gerald Autler  
Senior Project Manager/Planner  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
One City Hall Square, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02201

Re: Northeastern University PNF Filing

Dear Mr. Autler:

I had the opportunity to discuss the recent PNF filing by Northeastern University with Jeff Doggett in order to become more informed about the intended use of St. Ann's Church, which is mentioned in that filing. I'm particularly interested since my wife and I live across the street at 80 St. Stephen Street. Jeff outlined the proposed uses that the University is considering for this facility. After talking about the various potential uses, I see no issues with the functions they are proposing.

Specifically, my interest in the site is two fold. One is that I feel that the building is a significant contributor to the character and fabric of the neighborhood. My hope is that this building remains in its current form for many years to come. In order for this to happen, I know that there is a need to utilize this building in a way that keeps it viable. I support the proposal of small events, dinners, acoustic performances, community meetings, lectures and other periodic events that may occur.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Randy Kreie". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "R" and a trailing flourish.

Randy Kreie  
80 St Stephen Street  
Boston, MA 02115